

Muscatatuck Urban Training Center: A Concept for a Homeland Security Living Laboratory

*Prepared by the Indiana Department of Homeland Security
Homeland Security Training Institute*

General -

The acts of terrorism, which occurred on September 11th, 2001, and subsequent world events have forever changed the manner in which first responders in the United States must be prepared to respond. Urban areas around the nation are high profile targets and present many unique challenges to first responder preparedness activities. The urban area is perfect for hostage-taking, kidnapping, biological releases, and other forms of terrorist attack. In the post 9/11 environment more than ever, soldiers and civilians need opportunities to learn, train and evaluate their procedures in realistic urban environments.



Background -

The Muscatatuck State Developmental Center (1920), formerly called Muscatatuck State School and Indiana Farm Colony for Feeble Minded Youth, had once housed over 2000 developmentally disabled residents. In the spring of 2001, Muscatatuck was ordered to close its doors by the end of 2003. However, the transference of all the patients delayed the official closure until 2004. On September 1, 2004 the developmental center was transferred to the Indiana National Guard for the purpose of training homeland defense and security professionals.

Overview -

The Indiana National Guard plans to transform the existing facility into the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center (MUTC) by making it a full-immersion contemporary urban operating environment. This site has the capability to conduct doctrinal and non-doctrinal Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security events for more than 2,500 individuals at a time, both military and civilian. This joint training capability will realize the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Domestic Preparedness strategic directive to achieve and sustain national preparedness through the conduct of systemic and periodic rehearsal of homeland security missions.

MUTC offers the ideal land, space, and facilities for conducting training and exercises in an urban environment. It effectively replicates a small town complete with 70 furnished buildings comprising approximately five square city blocks within its 1,000 acres boundary. The buildings range from one to five stories, including nine with basements. The buildings range from a hospital, apartments, housing, a school, administration buildings, a power plant, and a water treatment facility. Nine miles of road network, a tunnel that connects 80% of the buildings, and a 180 acre reservoir combine to offer unique training opportunities necessary for contemporary response to a variety of homeland security threat scenarios all at one location.



The MUTC site has tremendous potential as a training center for civilian public safety personnel, as well as, for use by military personnel. The Indiana Department of Homeland Security, in conjunction with the Indiana National Guard, has completed two major Military Support to Civil Authorities (MSCA) full scale exercises at MUTC, as well as several statewide public safety training offerings.

The MUTC is also being used frequently by local public safety and response organizations throughout Indiana on a routine basis. Law Enforcement Tactical Teams (SWAT Teams) benefit from having a dedicated training site to conduct tactical scenarios with which they are not familiar and the grounds have proven extremely useful in conducting training for special events and riots.

The MUTC facility provides the Indiana Department of Homeland Security with the opportunity for the delivery of some very specialized training which we previously were either unable to offer within the state or only offered on very limited basis due to the lack of an appropriate training facility.



These courses might include:

ODP Weapons of Mass Destruction Tactical Operations Course (this course is a 5 day course designed for SWAT teams to training in the proper tactical response to a WMD incident), **Hospital Emergency Response to Terrorism/Weapons of Mass Destruction Course** and **Hospital Leadership Course** (these courses are 4-day exercise based training courses in which instructors assist healthcare professionals develop the appropriate decisions in response to a WMD event), and **Integrated Emergency Management Courses** (this is series of exercise based courses in which instructors assist the leadership of an entire community or county to develop the appropriate decisions when responding to natural disasters, WMD events or acts of terrorism).

Additionally, over 80 courses are available through the Office of Domestic Preparedness, U.S. Department of Homeland Security specifically addressing Weapons of Mass Destruction training and plans include the use of this facility for a variety of local, district, statewide and national exercises.

Future plans for MUTC use by the Indiana Homeland Security Training Institute include:



The use of the hospital facilities at Muscatatuck to conduct realistic training and practical exercises in Mass Casualty and Mass Fatalities Response, establishing and operating Mass Prophylaxis sites, receipts and distribution of Strategic National Stockpile inventories and response to other public health emergencies conducted in a manner that is currently unavailable elsewhere in the state.

The lake and grounds of the facility provide excellent resources for the training of Search and Rescue K-9 Teams and personnel in cadaver recovery and water cadaver recovery training, as well as, ground search and K-9 trailing and tracking. A major exercise event has been scheduled at Muscatatuck for Indiana's Urban Search and Rescue Task Force One for the fall of 2005.



For more information on training and exercise opportunities available at Muscatatuck Urban Training Center through the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, contact Shari Hall, Exercise Program Manager at (812) 346-4401, ext. 1306 or shall@dhs.in.gov.